



Mr. Reynolds' beautiful home in Southern California, a show spot of the Golden State.

turned to me earnestly. You could see that despite the long interval of years he was still affected.

"There was something about that manuscript that took hold of me," he said. "We were having more than our share of business troubles and reverses at the time but after reading 'That Printer of Udells' I felt like taking off my coat and pitching in with renewed vigor. I felt also that a book that would inspire me like that would inspire others. The result justified my faith."

It was indeed from a business standpoint a desperate venture—an unknown writer and an unknown publisher. By straining his credit to the utmost Mr. Reynolds was able to raise \$10,000 with which to finance its publication. A large portion of this money was spent on advertising. The first edition was twenty-five hundred copies. More than a half million copies have been sold. The book broke even financially in its second year.

Thus did the man whose books have year after year topped the list of best sellers get his first hearing. No small part of the immense sale of his works has been due to the clever advertising of his publisher. Mr. Reynolds knows this part of the business from the ground up.

"It is not as simple a matter as it would appear," he explained. "Logically, you must first sell the jobber, then the dealer and lastly the public. But in reality the process is reversed. The public must be sold first; that is, the demand created. Very few book dealers are real salesmen. They simply wrap up the goods and take the money. The publisher is the real salesman. He creates the demand by advertising. But he must see to it that the jobber is stocked with the goods to meet the demand. Otherwise his work is wasted."

Mr. Reynolds does not agree with the critics who argue that Wright's books would have but small sale if it were not for the extensive advertising done in their behalf.

"No amount of advertising can put over a book unless it has merit," he said. "People may read the first one through curiosity but they read the second because they like the author. Mr. Wright's books have had a steadily increasing sale. The last two have each gone well over the million mark."

Perhaps no modern writer has aroused the discussion among the critics that Mr. Wright has. Every new book is the signal for an outburst of sarcasm among the reviewers. Mr. Wright has never outgrown a certain crudity of style. In his later books there is a tendency toward melodramatic effect that seems somewhat strained and artificial. But like many writers greater than he, what Mr. Wright lacks in finished technique he makes up in the power of the message he conveys. All his books have been written with an underlying purpose that grips the reader. The lack of polish is forgotten long before the message loses its force. He reaches the people he wants to reach. What more could be desired?

Both Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Wright have deserted the Middle West and settled in California. Mr. Wright, whose health is far from robust, spends a great deal of his time in the deserts and mountains of California, Arizona and Nevada. Most of his later books have been written while on the lonely desert or high in the mountains. He is very fond of the outdoors that has permitted him to retain the vitality to complete his life work.

Mr. Reynolds also came to California in search of health. The strain of the terrific struggle of his younger days was too much for even his country-bred constitution. He has gone back to the soil and personally superintends his immense fruit ranch. Already, he declares, he has added ten years to his life.



E. W. REYNOLDS

In his little study among the pepper trees on his half million dollar estate he plans the advertising campaigns for each new book by Mr. Wright but he leaves the execution of his plans to his associates. Twice he has left the Relay Heights home to superintend the filming of two of Wright's books but ten months out of the year will find him busy among his orange groves.

Many authors have importuned him to read their works but he turns a deaf ear. He has published only one man's books. Harold Bell Wright has had no other publisher. It is a matter of sentiment with him. Perhaps some day he will change his mind but he doubts that he will ever find another Harold Bell Wright.

Why do we use the expression "apple pie order" when we mean that things are exactly in their right place?

Because every Saturday a certain Puritan dame, Hepzibah Merton, made a practice of baking two or three dozen apple pies which were to last her family through the week. She placed them on the shelves in her pantry, labeling each according to the day of the week on which it was to be used, and the pantry, thus arranged, was said to be in apple pie order.

Why is an unmarried woman called a spinster?

Because women were prohibited from marrying in olden days until they had spun a full set of bed furnishings and thus, until their marriage, they spent much time at the spinning wheel and were, therefore, "spinsters."

Why do clergymen habitually wear black?

Because when Martin Luther, in 1524, laid aside the habit of a monk and adopted the style of dress prevailing at the time, the Elector of Saxony used to

The Romance of Soapstone

ROMANCES and soapstones may seem far apart; they may be now, but they were in other days about as close as romances and diamonds. Long ago diamonds were a real-for-sure luxury within the reach of few. So, of course, romances hinged upon other mediums.

When our fathers and mothers went to school, pencils of lead encased in wood, also pads of scratch paper, were uncommon. Susie had a slate, Johnny had a slate, likewise Susie's sister and Johnny's brother; almost every one of the boys and girls had slates. They also owned pencils of stone which gave out an unpleasant grinding or screaming noise when used. At rare intervals somebody would acquire a lighter colored pencil which possessed the envied quality of moving softly over the surface of the slate. The fortunate boy or girl would invariably proclaim it "a daisy 'cause it's soapstone."

In those old days of the long ago it was no small honor to have or to hold a smooth-marking pencil of soapstone, the acme of excellence by virtue of its ability to glide along without complaint. Of course, Johnny and Susie and the other unfortunates became frankly covetous. All the fellows would immediately begin to talk "a trade." Presently some sprightly, coy wearer of pigtails would proceed to put the unselfishness of the owner and the vulnerability of his heart to the acid test by asking a loan of the magic pencil "till recess." His compliance often revealed the identity of the girl whom he had been secretly adoring all the while. His resurrection of the scratcher which he had shoved to the farthest corner of his desk betokened a childhood romance budding and flowering with the fragrance of that in Whittier's exquisite poem, "In School Days."

Don't tell me that plebeian old soapstone has not played a real part in the motivation of Cupid's darts and arts. In that pencil rôle, however, it is now a has-been.

Soapstone is the name that loosely designates many minerals with differing properties. They are alike, nevertheless, in one respect; all have a peculiar feel or texture that reminds one of soap or, indeed, of grease.

Your grandfather and grandmother, possibly your father and mother, can tell you that soapstone can't be beat as a footwarmer. In the age before the introduction of the hot water bottle of rubber which we know so well today, stones and bricks were successfully employed in caring for the sick and as a rude sort of portable stove to make travel in winter less rigorous and more comfortable than it would be without the device. The preferred material was soapstone, for, though slow to warm up, it assuredly retained the heat.

This rock, scientifically termed steatite, is mined in Germany and the British Isles, also in many of our states including Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, Maryland, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Georgia and Virginia. The quarries of Vermont undoubtedly produce the best grade for heating purposes, whereas the Virginia variety has established its superiority for fabricating or general manufacturing.

As acids do not affect soapstone, chemists use it as a substitute for cork stoppers, though glass is now more popular. Tailors mark cloth, for cutting or altering, with a type of soapstone that approaches talc in softness and which also serves as the body or base of many tooth and face powders. Tire talc, employed by chauffeurs to prevent friction between the inner tube and the outer casing, is usually nothing more than ground soapstone. Shoe dealers use this same material for dusting new footwear so it will slip on and off easily. This soapstone, or steatite, is a member of the talc family though somewhat more compact than the mineral possessing that name.

When carpenters are idle, the market for this greasy substance is largely becalmed; when these planers of wood and drivers of nails are rushed, the quarries show an increased business. Thus soapstone has become a dependable indicator or barometer, revealing the "ups" and "downs" of building activities.

Today the romance that started with the loaning of a soapstone pencil never happens; for both the pencils and the slates have gone out of style. The mineral now assists Cupid in two ways, and I surmise it is every bit as effective as in the long ago. Would feminine wiles be half as fetching if they were not abetted with face powder? And there are no statistics on how many shoe clerks have been bewitched while waiting upon some fairy-like customer, dusting the clever creations of leather, and trying them on a pair of dainty feet encased in a pair of silken hose.

Why and Because

send to him from time to time pieces of black cloth, that color then being fashionable at the court. Luther's disciples thought because he wore black, it became them to do so, and

thus it came about that the clergy generally grew to regard it as the only proper color for them to wear.

Why is a woman's allowance called pin money?

Because at the beginning of the fifteenth century pins were considered a very acceptable present by women, who up to that time had used wooden skewers. Sometimes money was given with or instead of pins, and was called "pin money."

Why do we say: "Mind your p's and q's"?

Because in ancient times, behind the door of each alehouse there hung a slate, on which was written, P., which stood for pint, and Q., which stood for quart. A number was placed opposite each customer's name, according to the amount he imbibed. He was not expected to pay until Saturday night, when he had to "mind his p's and q's."